



Division of Insurance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Insurance Enrollment Deadline Fast Approaching *Uninsured Individuals Must Enroll By March 31 to Be Covered in 2014*

Denver – As the end of March approaches, the Colorado Division of Insurance reminds consumers to review their health insurance options and take action to make sure they are enrolled by March 31. That is the deadline for open enrollment for individual health insurance plans this year.

“We want to make sure everyone is aware of the upcoming deadline. If you are uninsured, you still have time to get covered before the window closes,” said Insurance Commissioner Marguerite Salazar. “Now is the time to ask questions, get educated and get covered.”

The deadline is important for individuals and families who are uninsured. However, for many, the deadline is not a concern, as most Coloradans get health insurance through their employers. Another large group qualifies for Medicaid, the state-federal insurance program for the poor and disabled, or Medicare, the federally funded program for seniors that allows people to enroll when they reach age 65.

The uninsured buying individual plans face a deadline of March 31 to enroll, whether they buy directly from insurance companies, through insurance brokers or agents, or through Connect for Health Colorado, the state’s new health insurance marketplace. If someone who can afford health insurance doesn’t have coverage in 2014, they may have to pay an additional tax liability. This will be either \$95 or 1% of a person’s yearly household income, whichever is greater.

Those without health insurance can shop for new coverage using the following methods.

- **Connect for Health Colorado** – This is the state’s new online marketplace, a website where individuals and small businesses can shop for health insurance among the many plans offered by insurance companies. This is the only place to access tax credits that will make insurance more affordable. Visit www.connectforhealthco.com or call 1-855-752-6749.
- **Insurance Companies** – Health insurance companies are also available outside the new online marketplace. Consumers can work directly with an insurance company to purchase health coverage.
- **Insurance Brokers/Agents** – Consumers may already have an established relationship with an insurance agent/broker and prefer to work with such professionals, who are licensed by the Division of Insurance.

The Division encourages people to enroll for health coverage sooner rather than later. Going without insurance creates uncertainty, the potential for high medical costs and less financial stability should a serious illness or accident occur.

Consumers with questions about health insurance can contact the Division of Insurance at 303-894-7490 or 1-800-930-3745. The Division has trained experts ready to answer consumers' health insurance questions.

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The [Colorado Division of Insurance](#) regulates the insurance industry and assists consumers and other stakeholders with insurance issues.

[DORA](#) is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado.

Consumer protection is our mission.



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March 31st Deadline for Individual Coverage - FAQ

Q. What is the deadline for buying health insurance for individual coverage (not employer-based) in 2014?

- A. Individuals have until March 31 to complete their enrollment for health insurance this year.

Individuals will only be allowed to apply for insurance after March 31 in the case of special circumstances, such as giving birth to or adopting a child, getting married or divorced, or losing one's job.

Q. What happens if I miss the deadline?

- A. You may have to pay an additional tax liability, but more importantly, you won't have health insurance. Going without insurance creates uncertainty, the potential for high medical costs and less financial stability should a serious illness or accident occur.

Q. When can I buy insurance again?

- A. November 15, 2014, is the date currently proposed for open enrollment for individual health insurance plans (meaning not through an employer) for coverage in 2015.

Q. Can I still get insurance through my employer?

- A. The enrollment deadline of March 31 is for people buying individual health insurance plans. It is not for employer-based coverage.

If you qualify for employer-based coverage, check with your benefits professional, human resources office or insurance company about your specific enrollment periods.

Q. What is the penalty if I don't have insurance?

- A. If you can afford health insurance and don't buy it, you may have to pay an additional tax liability. This will be either \$95 or one percent of your yearly household income, **which ever is greater**. If you also choose not to buy health insurance for your children, you may be assessed the tax liability of \$47.50 per child. This is a tax issue and is enforced by the IRS.

The [Division of Insurance \(DOI\)](#), part of the [Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies](#), is a state agency that regulates the insurance industry in Colorado and works with consumers to answer their questions, help them understand their health insurance, and ensures consumers receive the benefits for which they paid. DOI reviews insurance companies' requests to change the premiums (rates) they charge Colorado consumers as well as the benefits included in insurance plans sold in the state. DOI protects consumers by making sure insurance companies and agents comply with state laws and regulations.

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